The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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SWEET PATIENCE.

O trifling tasks so often done,
Yet ever to be done anew!
O cares which come with every sun,
Morn after morn, the long years through!
We shrink beneath their paltry sway,—
The irksome calls of every day.

The restless sense of wasted power,
The tiresome round of little things,
Are hard to bear, as hour by hour
Its tedious iteration brings:
Who shall evade or who delay
The small demands of every day?

The bowlder in the torrent's course,
By tide and tempest lashed in vain,
Obeys the wave-whirled pebble's force,
And yields its substance grain by grain.
So crumble strongest lives away
Beneath the wear of every day.

. . . . . .

We rise to meet a heavy blow,—
Our souls a sudden bravery fills,—
But we endure not always so
The drop by drop of little ills!
We still deplore and still obey
The hard behests of every day.

The heart which boldly faces death
Upon the battlefield, and dares
Cannon and bayonets, faints beneath
The needle points of frets and cares:
The stoutest spirits they dismay,—
The tiny things of every day.

And even saints of holy fame,
Whose souls by faith have overcome,
Who wore amid the cruel flame
The molten crown of martyrdom,
Bore not without complaint alway
The petty pains of every day.

Ah! more than martyr's aureole,
And more than hero's heart of fire,
We need the humble strength of soul
Which daily toils and ills require:
Sweet Patience, grant us, if you may,
An added grace for every day.

—*Elizabeth Akers Allen.*

A CROWN OF LIFE.

"Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer. . . . Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—REV. ii. 10.

In various places in the New Testament it is more or less distinctly taught that the first outcome of a good life is simply more life. It seems to me that Jesus gave the noblest utterance to his mission when he said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He was not speaking of a salvation after death, but of life then and there. The author of the book of Revelation makes his crown of life that is to be given to the faithful a matter to come after death. They who are faithful unto death shall receive only a larger, richer life. But the thought of Jesus is a broader one even than that. They who are faithful, pure in heart, noble, do receive at once more abundant life; and life is but one thing before or after death.

This, I think, brings us to a knowledge of the perfect justice of God in extending rewards. Life is the great gift of God to man; and every helpful influence from God, every sacred teacher, every event of life, rightly used, serves to enlarge, to broaden or deepen our life. The one continuous reward of right conduct is the blessed advance of character or life which such conduct brings. There is something which no evil heart can enjoy, but which no righteous soul ever for an instant fails to receive as the immediate reward of his good qualities. That gracious reward is life with its uncounted possibilities, to be your deepest joy at the present time and your eternal field for high surprise. The ancient Greeks gave a crown of wild olive to the victors in their athletic or poetic contests, and the modern world gives crowns of wealth and conspicuous leadership to those who win in its competitions. But there is a lovelier crown than these. The many souls that seem to lose in their competitions with others are in reality gaining much of permanent value while they strive with noble aims. To all who work thus, whether they seem to win or not, there is given life as a crown. Be faithful unto death; and you receive that crown,— simply life. It is not that you are given a triumphal entry into some heavenly city, whose golden streets are lined with crowds of cheering angels, who praise you as you march in behind a herald who proclaims your valiant deed. There has been too much of this worldliness in human expectations of heaven. You simply enter into life with a freedom of spirit and a purity of feeling which reveal to you anew and more clearly than you ever saw it before that the purest joy, the greatest victory of life, is just the living of it. The hero makes his greatest sacrifice at the place of perilous duty, loses all his joys and treasures because honor bids him die, only to awake and find that life is still his, but brighter, dearer, than ever, because now ennobled by his faithful heroism. Once a mere existence full of mingled joy and sorrow, life has now been by his own act transformed into a crown, a reward sufficient for all goodness. It may well be that heaven is simply the discovery by an immortal soul of the divine joy it is to be alive. If so, then, surely, life can be transformed into a crown, a measureless joy, at any moment by any sterling act of worthiness in the midst of the trials that make goodness difficult. To be faithful unto death is required but once of any man; but to be faithful up to the full requirement of every situation is demanded of us all at every moment, so that we can at any instant discover the real sublimity of this life of ours. As the immensity of space waits for our growing science to penetrate its distant mysteries, so the immensity of life's beauty and delight waits all around us and within us for us to arouse our half-exerted faculties and understand it. Our life is an incessant growth when we are doing our best with it; and the most delightful, most satisfying truths about this growth of ours is that the blossom of it, the beautiful result of our endeavors, our tribulations, and our hopes, is not any mere reward of a day, any praise or gift which might dazzle a child, but more life, a crown of life. That is a blossom so rare in its loveliness that to appreciate it is to possess it; and to possess it, to know that life is the soul's highest blessing, is to understand God's dealings with man in most noble faith. I trust God in perceiving that the only direct reward he ever gives, the crown of life, is the sweetest, highest possible outcome of any excellence of conduct.

Many are slow in attaining this grand confidence in life; and I suppose that nearly all of my hearers have sometimes a despondent mood, when they doubt if life is such a desirable thing, after all. But these are not your wisest moods, and very few yield to them permanently. Despair about your own life will keep God at arm's length from you almost as surely as sin will. To feel God's reality deeply and gladly, you must first know yourself; for 'tis in your own life that you must chiefly search for grounds of faith in God. It is a fact, I think, that, although there is a good deal of youthful pessimistic talk, and bitter words are often heard, discontent with life does not sink very deep into any soul. There are very few who actually and completely tire of life. Multitudes chafe against their limitations, and complain of their hardships, and seem to feel that their desired happiness is far away from them;

but 'tis the trials, not life itself, which they denounce. Life is clung to passionately and selfishly by the ignorant, trustfully and bravely by those who feel its eternal nature. They who believe most strongly that life is everlasting are learning more and more to find in the present time all the blessed things they feel the future heaven will maintain.

The divineness of this crown of life is made evident by its universality. Every good deed, every pure thought, broadens into finer life. If any man of an earnest mind understands what earnestness is worth, he has already the one divine reward of earnestness, and need not care to be popularly known as an example of zeal.

See life in this light, my friend, and, so far as you are concerned, the sting is taken away from all your failures and difficulties. The deepening, broadening, enriching, of your nature, is your reward for your faithfulness through your long years of toil, hardship, loss, and grief. The merry child may be the happiest of mortals in a sense, but he has yet to earn the greatest blessings of life. He has only made a beginning in life itself. Not till he has faced the sternest discipline of toil and disappointment will he be capable of knowing what good things life bestows upon them that are faithful. Therefore, I say to every young and untried soul, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; for not even God can bestow real life upon you until you have laid foundations for it by loyal struggles under hard conditions." We know that restricted resources call out a man's own mental resources, and that a Robinson Crusoe with only a jack-knife to depend upon accomplishes more with it than another can with a whole kit of tools. We know that the gravest anxieties of business or private life give rise to our firmest courage, our grandest moral strength. We know how the trials and bitter, searching things of life take hold of careless youths and silly girls, and change their mood from vanity to beauty and strength, as the flames that burn out the iron's impurities and give forth the royal steel. In all such moral developments we see the gift of larger life coming to those that have earned it by desert; and, what is of most immediate interest to us, we see it coming without weary delay while yet the fierce struggle goes on.

The most significant thing in the matter is that the crown of life—that is, life in its aspect of moral success and self-reliance—does not come to any one class of men more than to others. It comes in the very midst of anxiety, poverty, and physical weakness; and it blossoms forth also in souls that have easier careers. The only places where it does not appear are the wastes of vice and selfishness. No wicked person can know the depths of life until he changes his course, and begins by moral struggle to develop his soul. To all such it was truly said, "Except ye turn, and become as little children,"—that is, pure in heart, sincere, truthful,—"ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." But so merciful is our God, so gracious his work upon us, that the instant any soul does turn, does feel a noble aim, and begin to obey its guidance, that instant life takes on a new and lovelier aspect. Our life gains in value and interest as fast as we press on with our moral growth. The miserly think to grasp the good things of life. The selfish and the crafty dream of making the most of life by fraud and injustice. 'Tis a horrible delusion, a living death. Life throbs only in goodness. It grows rich as the soul grows excellent. In no other way than by long-continued, valiant moral endeavor can any soul gain heaven here or hereafter.

Would you know what life is? Probe its very depths, and be able to distinguish good from evil? Then do not tamper with vice or study men's evil deeds. There is nothing of life there. Go right onward in the boundless patience of necessary toil, in the sterling honor of doing everything as well as you can, in the high-spirited faithfulness that honors little duties as much as conspicuous ones, and you shall know life in all its depth and length and breadth and beauty.

The crown of life which settles upon us as we hold ourselves faithfully in the front rank of duty is, in the first place, intelligence, perception, understanding. It is the power of knowing; and with it come the fine joys of mental growth as the mind grapples with deep problems, and watches the facts which the great laws of God marshal around each observant mind. This gift of

thought is a marvellous thing; for it makes man the master over everything he studies, and fills every moment with intense interest. If you can think connectedly, soberly, hopefully, your life is free from nine-tenths of the self-inflicted sorrows that afflict mankind. "Knowledge always grows from more to more," making you better able to cope with the difficulties of your occupation and the mysteries of human thought. Again, life is a crown in bringing to us refined feelings, the power to appreciate noble motives, to read the better traits that lie beneath some men's roughness, and to honor gladly delicate emotions which rude and untrained souls do not comprehend. Life has grown very rich to you, if you are deeply sensitive about giving pain to others and quick to see and answer every appeal to your sympathy. You gain a purity that dares to look all evil in the face, to lend a hand to any one who seeks your assistance in the battle against it, and yet serves to make you shrink from doing evil as from utter dishonor.

Best of all, life brings you the mighty traits of character that fit you to do the work of the world in noble fashion. As life deepens in you, you gain hope that sustains you through all delays and dangers, love that teaches you how to treat your fellow-men in helpful spirit, faith that makes God a reality to you more precious than all other truth. Thus, when human souls are on the upward march, that movement is invariably one of winning dearer treasures of the life with God. Upon all the faithful life bestows—that is to say, God, who made life the thing it is, bestows—the ever-increasing power to think, the deepening refinement of feeling, and the broadening ability to act with righteous efficiency in all the affairs of earth and heaven.—*Charles E. St. John.*

THE STILL HOUR.

In the morning I will pray
For his blessing on the day:
What this day shall be my lot,
Light or darkness, know I not.

Should it be with clouds o'ercast,—
Clouds of sorrow gathering fast,—
Thou, who givest light divine,
Shine within me, Lord, oh, shine!

Show me, if I tempted be,
How to find all strength in thee,
And a perfect triumph win
Over every bosom sin.

Keep my feet from secret snares,
Keep my eyes, O God, from tears:
Every step thy grace attend,
And my soul from death defend.

Then, when fall the shades of night,
All within shall still be light:
Thou wilt peace around diffuse
Gently as the evening dews.

—*W. H. Furness.*

SEASONS OF PRAYER.

In one sense prayer may be considered a duty. It is a duty to pray, just as it is a duty to live on terms of affectionate intimacy and intercourse with our father and our mother, our wife and children. But it is not a duty in the sense in which it is our duty to tell the truth or to pay our debts. In other words, it does not belong to that class of duties in which the outward act is the principal thing. A man ought to tell the truth, he ought to pay his debts, no matter in what frame of mind he does it. But what would you think of a child who should make it a rule to go to its father so many times a day and express gratitude to him in a formal manner for his love and paternal care? The moment that the expression of affection was made a duty, in this sense of the word, it would become a cold and difficult matter enough. But in the same way we often freeze our religious affections by making it a mere matter of duty to pray so much and so often every day, instead of regarding prayer in its true light as the highest joy, the freest and happiest privilege allotted to us here below.

In describing the true way to cultivate the spirit of prayer, we must say that to pray merely as a duty rather hinders than helps it. But let the mind and heart be pervaded with the conviction of those great truths which constitute the gospel, and, being filled with a spirit of trust, never to be shaken, in God as our tenderest friend, we shall always be ready to come boldly to the throne of grace to find help in time of need. We shall have that sense of a Divine Presence which shall cause us to pray without ceasing, though our prayers will be often only a throb of gratitude, or a sudden

aspiration of love, or the soul falling down in humility, and bowing itself before God. And then, too, we shall find a place and a use for times of prayer, and for a certain degree of method and system in prayer. . . It does not prove my friendship insincere that I say to my friend when we part, "Let us write to each other at least twice a week," or "Let us look every evening at a certain hour at a particular star, and think of one another." If the letter-writing and star-looking are done merely as a duty, it will be bad; and, if the method of prayer be retained when its life is gone, this is also bad. But every pious heart must feel that God, in the very arrangements of nature and in the ordinances of the heavens, says to us, "In the morning think of me,—in that calm hour which I send you before the din and toil of life commences; and in the evening think of me,—after it is over, when the holy stars pour quiet upon the earth, then remember me." And so, too, on the Sabbath day we shall have opportunity for a closer walk with God. — *James Freeman Clarke.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

THE DAY AFTER THE STORM.

John vi.; *Matthew* xiv.; *Mark* vi.

It has been a little puzzling that there seem to have been *two* Bethsaidas on the shore of Lake Gennesaret,—puzzling, that is, when we try to fix the exact geography of the narrative, but not strange when we know the meaning of the name. Bethsaida means Fisherton * or the Fishers' town, and is an appellation that grows up of itself, and may be multiplied indefinitely. Edersheim says he has counted in England twelve towns whose names might be freely translated Bethsaida.

As Mark names Bethsaida,† and John Capernaum,‡ as the destination of the boat on its return voyage, it is probable that *this* Bethsaida was a small hamlet of fishermen's houses, adjacent to Capernaum, just as we often find such a little village near a larger coast town in our own day. It makes this more probable that we find no traces of an ancient harbor near the site of Tell Hûm, now supposed to be the Capernaum of the New Testament. Moreover, this would explain why Peter and Andrew (fishermen) were mentioned by John * as of Bethsaida, while Mark, the intimate friend of Peter, speaks of their house in Capernaum. How simple is the explanation of all this, and how captious the criticism which would bring an accusation of want of historic accuracy on account of these slight discrepancies!

Jesus did not find the rest and seclusion which he sought on the other side of the lake. He seems to have resolved to return to Capernaum (thus leaving the immediate neighborhood of Herod Antipas), and withdraw farther from the centre of excitement in the regions of Tyre and Sidon.

Why, then, did he remain at Capernaum, and hold the discourses recorded in John vi.? It would seem to have been safer to proceed at once to Syro-Phœnicia.

We have a clew. The latter part of the chapter gives the preaching of Jesus "in synagogue" † at Capernaum. These words were then spoken on the Sabbath. Tracing events backward, we may infer that Jesus left Capernaum for Bethsaida-Julias on Thursday; that the night between Thursday and Friday witnessed the scene of the storm on the lake, and of Jesus overtaking the boat in the middle of the sea. On *Friday* (the day before the Sabbath) the "multitude" remaining on the other shore followed in the small boats. On the next day, the Sabbath, Jesus preached in the synagogue at Capernaum.

Arriving at Bethsaida of Capernaum on Friday morning, there was not time for the journey to Syro-Phœnicia before the Sabbath. Besides, the fatigue and excitement of Thursday—lasting all day *and night*, and precluding sleep—were not a good preparation for a journey. On the Sabbath, also, there was but slight danger from either the Pharisees or Herod Antipas. On the Friday night, therefore, Jesus slept at Capernaum,—perhaps in the house of Peter, perhaps in that of Jairus,—and preached in his own synagogue on the Sabbath, Jairus and the "little daughter" being, no doubt, among his hearers.

The boat, which had aimed at Bethsaida

* Edersheim, "Life and Times."
† Mark vi. 45. ‡ John vi. 17.

* John i. 44. † So literally. Edersheim.

of Capernaum, was, by the storm, blown out of its course. It touched the shore at "Gennesaret"; * that is, the plain of Gennesaret. The beauty of this region is described in glowing terms by Josephus and the rabbis. Edersheim says:—

"To this day it bears marks of having been the most favored spot in this favored region. Travelling northward from Tiberias along the lake, we follow for about five or six miles a narrow ledge of land, shut in by mountains, when we reach the home of the Magdalene, the ancient Magdala (the modern Mejdel). Right over against us, on the other side, is *Kersa* (Gerasa), the scene of the great miracle. On leaving Magdala, the mountains recede, and form an amphitheatric plain, more than a mile wide and four or five miles long. This is 'the land of Gennesaret' (el-Ghuweir). We pass across the 'valley of Doves' which intersects it about one mile to the north of Magdala, and pursue our journey over the well-watered plain, till, after somewhat more than an hour, we reach its northern boundary, a little beyond *Khân Minyeh*. The latter has, in accordance with tradition, been regarded by some as representing Bethsaida, † but seems too far from the lake and too much south of Capernaum to answer the requirements."

Both Matthew and Mark relate that, as soon as it was known that Jesus was in this region, the people eagerly brought their sick to him to be healed. Mark says, "Straightway the people knew him, and ran round about that whole region, and began to carry about on their beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And wheresoever he entered, into villages or into cities or into the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were made whole."

In the walk back to Capernaum, now and then passing through the little, closely packed Eastern villages and cities, was spent a large part — perhaps the whole — of Friday. The people crowding about him would make his progress slow.

He was overtaken, moreover, in the course of the day by those who followed him on Friday morning from Bethsaida-Julias. John gives a minute account of their proceedings.

"On the morrow the multitude which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat * there, save one, and that Jesus entered not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples went away alone (howbeit there came boats† from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks): when the multitude therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they themselves got into the boats, and came to Capernaum,‡ seeking Jesus. And, when they found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled. Work not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which abideth unto eternal life."

We must here fill out the narrative in John from Matthew xv. and Mark vii. We will consider these passages in our next lesson. L. F. C.

[I am greatly indebted to Edersheim in this lesson, and hope that all who have access to his book "Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah" will read the book itself. Nothing can be more valuable as throwing light on the New Testament from an accurate knowledge of Jewish customs.]

* Mark vi. 53.

† See Baedeker for reasons against regarding *Khân Minyeh* as Capernaum itself.

* Gr. "little boat." † Gr. "little boats."

‡ Meeting Jesus either on his arrival at Capernaum or on the road thither.

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The following books are offered by the King's Chapel Branch. Address Miss Marjory S. Devlin, 61 Bay State Road, Boston, Mass.

Educational.

Martin's "Civil Government"; Higginson's "History of the United States"; Johnson's "History of the United States"; Rollin's "Ancient History," six volumes; "The Middle Kingdom," two volumes; "Travels in North America"; "A Day in Athens with Socrates"; Quackenbos's "Rhetoric"; Chittenden's "Rhetoric"; Hyde's "Use of English"; "Complete Speller"; Davis's "Spelling Book"; Tisud's "Spelling Book"; "Primer"; Kerl's "Grammar"; Shaw's "English and American Literature"; "Adjusted Constitution of Massachusetts"; Hayward's "Gazetteer of Massachusetts"; "Nominal Statistics of Michigan"; "Photography of the Heavens"; Hutchinson's "Laws of Health"; Brand's "Health Lessons for Beginners"; Brand's "Lessons on the Human Body"; Blaisdell's "How to Keep Well"; Blaikie's "Sound Bodies for Boys and Girls"; "School Hygiene"; "Hygiene for Young People"; "Health Primer"; "How We Live"; Smith's "Elementary Physiology and Hygiene"; Avery's "Elements of Natural Philosophy"; Hooker's "Chemistry"; Hooker's "New Chemistry"; "First Lessons in Physics"; "Natural Philosophy"; "Mental Philosophy"; "Parlor Gymnasium"; "Lectures on School Hygiene"; "Child's Book of Nature"; "Dictionary"; "Catechism of English History"; "Natural History Reader," three volumes; Cooley's "Chemistry"; Silliman's "Chemistry"; Rolfe and Gillet's "Chemistry"; "Italian Grammar"; Zumpt's "Latin Grammar"; Harkness's "Latin Grammar"; "Latin Primer"; "The Latin Subjunctive"; "English Grammar"; Appleton's "Fifth Reader"; "General Atlas"; Cornell's "Companion

Atlas"; Harper's "School Geography"; Housten's "Physical Geography"; Warren's "Physical Geography"; "Geography of the Heavens"; "Three Thousand Test Examples in Arithmetic."

Miscellaneous.

"Pendennis"; "Vanity Fair"; "Felix Holt"; "Extracts from Shakspere"; "In His Name," Hale; "Wonder Book," Hawthorne; "Progress and Poverty"; "Stage Land," Jerome K. Jerome; "Siècle de Louis XIV.," Voltaire; "History of the French Revolution of 1848," Lamartine; "Uprising of a Great People" (Civil War); "Life of Mrs. Barbauld"; "Study of Maria Edgeworth"; "Maria Edgeworth's Classic Tales"; "The Gift of Friendship," poems; Mrs. Sigourney's "Poems"; Mrs. Hemans's "Poems"; James Montgomery's "Poems"; Miss Gould's "Poems"; "Songs and Hymns of Common Life"; "Later Lyrics," Julia Ward Howe; "Book of Poems," J. W. Chadwick; "Lalla Rookh"; Young's "Night Thoughts" (two copies).

Religious.

"Pilgrim's Progress"; "Early Hebrew Stories"; "Lives and Deeds of Hebrews"; "Teachings of Jesus"; "The Critical English Testament"; "Sunday-school Lessons on the Life of Jesus"; "Prophets and Kings," Spaulding; "Life of Dean Stanley"; "Studies in Religion"; "The Thought of God, and Other Poems"; "Book of Hymns"; "Psalms and Hymns"; "Christian Hymns"; "Wrestling and Waiting"; Lowell's "Sermons"; Theodore Parker's "Ten Sermons"; Theodore Parker's "Prayers."

Miss Helen L. Bayley, 133 Austin Street, Cambridgeport, Mass., offers the following books: "Nimport," E. L. Bynner; "An Auld Licht Manse," J. M. Barrie; "Poems," by Edgar Fawcett; "Le Ménage" (French); "Vornehme Welt" (two German tales); Walton's "Written Arithmetic"; "History of England," Berard; "Lessons in Logic," Jevons; "Lessons in Physics"; "Latin Lessons," Leighton; "Children's Services," a book of family worship; "Tritons"; "The Longfellow Birthday Book"; "The Georgians."

Miss M. D. Fette, 11 Walnut Street, Boston, Mass., offers the following books: "Courtship of Miles Standish," Longfellow; "The Story of Ida," Alexander; "Cricket on the Hearth," Dickens; "By the Gate of the Sea," Murray; "Romola," George Eliot.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass., offers to Sunday-school teachers Furness's interesting sermon on the "Resurrection of Jesus," printed last year in *The Cheerful Letter* (a large number of them in tract form, for the use of Sunday-schools and Bible classes); also the following Easter sermons by James Freeman Clarke: "Souls already Risen with Christ," "The Old and New View of the Hereafter," "Homes in Heaven and on Earth," "Reasons for Believing in a Future Life" (each sermon a small pamphlet by itself); also her own lessons on the life of Jesus (printed in *The Cheerful Letter*) in tract form: "The Baptism," "The Temptation," "Jesus in the Temple," "Jesus in the Synagogue," John the Baptist," "A First Lesson on the Sermon on the Mount," "Healing the Leper," "The Maniac of Gadara," "The Little Daughter of Jairus," "The Young Man of Nain," etc.

The following books are offered by Mrs. J. Wooldredge, West Newton, Mass.: "Miss Tommy," D. M. Muloch Craik; "Lover or Friend," Rosa N. Carey; "Matthew Arnold," W. E. Norris; "My Child and I," Florence Warden; "Pluck," John Strange Winter; "A Change of Air," A. Hope; "The Man in Black," Stanley J. Weyman; "In Far Lochaber," Black; "Doctor Ben," Witherspoon; "Doreen," Edna Lyall; "The Monk's Wedding," translated by S. H. Adams.

The following books are offered by Miss E. D. Howe, 8 Washington Street, Beverly, Mass.: "History of Our Own Times," M'Carthy; "Lady Car," Oliphant; "Auld Licht Idylls," Barrie; "Two Chiefs of Dunboy," Froude; "Titus"; "Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush."

The Pepperell Branch offer the *Youth's Companion* for 1894–95 (complete); also odd numbers of *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Woman's Journal*, *Every Other Sunday*, *Household*, and *Youth's Companion*. Address Mrs. Harry B. Shattuck, East Pepperell, Mass.

Miss H. A. Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., renews her offer of charades or puzzles.

The Ladies of the First Church Alliance, Salem, Mass., offer the following books. Address Mrs. A. R. Millett, 12½ Hathorne Street, Salem, Mass. Allen's "Latin Grammar"; Ollendorff's "French Grammar" (Jewett's edition); "The Christian Life" (for Sunday-school teachers); "Poems," Willis; "Youthful Voices" (song book); "La Famille de Germandre" (French Reader), George Sand.

Harper's Magazine for 1895 is offered by Miss Harriet A. Carlton, 607 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.

Mrs. M. L. Brower, 45 Trumbull Street, New Haven, Connecticut, has a large Bible, suitable for a needy church, which she kindly offers to such.

The following books are offered by the South Parish Branch of the Women's Alliance, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Persons applying will please send a reference. Address Miss Edith T. Blake, 70 Market Street, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. "Called Back," "Dark Days," "Oliver Twist," "Dombey and Son," "Repented at Leisure."

The King's Chapel Branch offers (besides the list already given) fifty copies of "Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush," by Ian Maclaren. Address Miss D. Amory, 278 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.
(These stories are in Scotch dialect.)

REQUESTS.

READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING.

Libraries.

Standing requests for libraries from:—

Rev. George H. Taylor, Rocky Ford, Colorado;

Mrs. O. A. Langston, Sidney, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Cayuta, Schuyler County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama;

Mrs. Isadore E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon.

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

The editor and Book Club secretary request as a special favor that the kind friends who offer books would revise their lists somewhat more closely before sending them in. Books are sent in to the various Branches to give away, subject to their discretion; and, if not examined, sometimes (not often) a book not quite suitable for a library for young people is passed through. We try to revise also; but to read all books unknown to us, after receiving the offer, would delay the issue of our paper. Here, then, is a matter in which we should be grateful for help from the Branches. Our object is partly *educational;* and, as requests come from those who often do not know for what they are asking, we desire to discriminate, and place in the hands of the young only books whose atmosphere is wholesome, and to send *none* whose tendency is hurtful to any one.

Would any one be so kind as to send me the following books and magazines? I wish to give them to worthy people, who live in the country, who have not the means to buy them, where I have been doing charity work. Longfellow's "Evangeline," D. Webster's "Speeches," Demosthenes' "Orations," Macaulay's "History of England" and "Lays of Ancient Rome," any of E. L. Ellis's, Mark Twain's, Charles A. Fosdick's books, Marie Corelli's "Romance of two Worlds," *Review of Reviews, Self-culture, Century, Youth's Companion, New England, Woman's Journal, Medical Journal,* Encyclopædia, or Dictionary. Mrs. J. B. Kline, 1618 West 6th Avenue, Topeka, Kansas.

Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—I wish to thank you all for your kindness in sending me reading matter, and to request you not to send me any more, as I am going to move farther south, and do not know where my

post-office will be in future. The reading has given me a great deal of pleasure, and I will ever feel thankful to you all. My health has been very bad all winter. I have a bad cough. I have a friend here who would be very grateful for any reading sent her. I always divided mine with her. She has a house full of children, and, like myself, is very poor, and part of her time is a shut-in. She likes Unitarian literature, and any good reading will be appreciated by her and the children. She particularly likes *Ladies' Home Journal* and the *Housekeeper*. Her address is Mrs. J. Porter, Parkerville, Worth County, Georgia. While thanking you all again for your kindness, I will bid you all good-by. Mrs. Maud Compton, Parkerville, Georgia.

Mrs. Sarah Thornton, Filley, Nebraska, asks for reading matter of any kind for distribution in a place where it is much needed.

A happy New Year to all my *Cheerful Letter* friends! May joy and peace be with you throughout the year!

I have taken our dear paper for a year, and it has become endeared to us in many ways. My home duties keep me very close, and the reading I have received from the *Cheerful Letter* friends has been a source of great pleasure and profit to myself and children. We lend and give to all who appreciate good reading.

We feel very grateful to all who sent music to my daughter. We shall always appreciate good reading, and will endeavor to pass it to others and help in the good work. My friends will notice my change of address.

I am very anxious to read "Ben-Hur." I have heard it spoken of so highly, and would be glad to receive it. We like stories of travel, ancient histories, or anything that will elevate and expand the mind of the growing girl and boy. We devour everything sent us.

My little boy needs easy reading, as he is in the fourth reader, and cannot comprehend what a grown person can. My daughter enjoys anything I do. Mrs. Maggie Coe, Tioga, Texas (formerly Ector).

I will send you another invalid's name who would be glad of reading or anything to cheer her lonely hours. Her address is Miss Julia Sinclair, Truro, Madison County, Iowa. She is about sixty years old, and has been afflicted all her life with white swelling, I believe. She lives with her aunt, a widow lady, seventy-five years of age. They both enjoy such reading as the Sabbath reading. She spends her time in knitting and piecing quilts. Mrs. Carrie Smith, East Peru, Iowa.

Miss Lena S. Vannoy, Bethel, Texas, asks for ancient history.

Miss A. E. Howard, 6 Yarmouth Street, Boston, has received a request for "The Hoosier Schoolmaster" from a Post-office Mission correspondent. This book is not in her lending library. Can any one send it to her?

Mrs. Susie R. Thornton, Madisonville, Virginia, would be glad of a fashion plate or magazine sometimes.

Miss Alice Morris, Cotton Plant, Tippah County, Mississippi, wishes reading for her Sunday-school class. The children are ten, twelve, and fifteen years of age.

The Book Club secretary asks for offers of the following periodicals, to be printed in the Book Club: The *Atlantic*, *Century*, *Scribner's*, *Harper's*, *Littell's Living Age*, *Arena*, *Forum*, *Popular Science Monthly*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Babyhood* (The Mother's Nursery Guide), *Outlook*, *Christian Register*, *Pansy*, *Youth's Companion*, *Harper's Young People*, *Dumb Animals*, *Every Other Sunday*, The *New World*, *New England Magazine*, *Contemporary Review*, etc.

George Quinan (evangelist) will be glad to receive reading matter.

Miss C. A. Sheldon, Albion, Dane County, Wisconsin, asks for the *Household*.

Mrs. Bessie Hughes, Tom Bean, Texas, would be glad to receive any reading,—novels or more instructive books by good authors.

Mrs. Sallie B. Williams, Tom Bean, Texas, asks for "Home Influence," "Progress of the Christian Life," and "Little Pilgrim at Christmas."

As the stereoscopic views offered by Mrs. Millet were not sufficient to supply the demand, will not some one remember the fol-

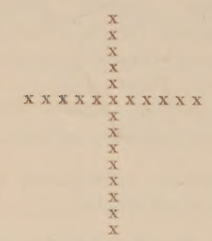
lowing persons? Miss Marguerite Hilyard, North Lubec, Maine; Mary E. Wicker, Wicker, North Carolina; Mrs. F. C. Dorn, Point Rock, Oneida County, New York; Mrs. Alice Reeves, Tom Bean, Texas; Mrs. T. S. Beard, Rough Creek, Charlotte County, Virginia; Mrs. R. E. S. Crosby, Jefferson County, Ohio; Mrs. E. A. Pearson, Kincaid, Kansas.

Will the lady from Lexington, who offered "Christ's Folk in the Apennines," kindly send her address to Mrs. Nichols? By some accident her signature was omitted in the offer.

I have not seen a *Cheerful Letter* for a long time, and do not know whether any changes have been made in the officers, so do not know if you are still secretary. If so, will you kindly insert in the next issue a notice of the sudden death of my mother, Mrs. Wormack, of Farmville, Virginia? She had a number of correspondents and friends among the ladies of the Cheerful Letter Book Club, whose kindness to her was greatly appreciated, and, I love to think, a comfort to her in the last year. Mrs. James Newcomb, Sayers, Bexar County, Texas.

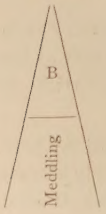
AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

1.



This cross has fourteen stones from top to bottom, also fourteen from bottom to end of either arm. Take out two stones and still have it count the same.

2. A Wise Adage.



man family wife.

3. One letter many times repeated will make this sentence read: —

G d l d p r t f r m p r t f r r t h d e d n s f e f r d.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN FEBRUARY NUMBER.

Descriptive Initials: 1, Charles Dickens; 2, Abraham Lincoln; 3, Martin Luther; 4, Christopher Columbus; 5, Oliver Wendell Holmes; 6, Robert Burns; 7, Daniel Webster; 8, Thomas Hughes; 9, Florence Nightingale; 10, Edward Everett; 11, R. W. Emerson; 12, H. B. Stowe; 13, Hans Christian Andersen; 14, John Burroughs; 15, P. T. Barnum.

Charades: 1, Nightingale; 2, Dolphin.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, April 3, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested in this work, whether members or not, are cordially invited.

DIRECTIONS.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals may be sent to the treasurer as above. The subscription is fifty cents a year.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Nichols; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper, in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Will all subscribers or receivers of *The Cheerful Letter*, whose copy does not come regularly or comes not correctly addressed, be kind enough to notify Miss Louise Howe, as above.

Send all notices of *changes of address and requests for discontinuance* to Miss Howe. Please do not send these notices to the editor, as it causes delay in the correction.